

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region V
POLLUTION REPORT**

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



270250

Date: Wednesday, April 04, 2007
From: Verneta Simon, on-scene coordinator

To: Verneta Simon, U.S. EPA David Chung, U.S. EPA HQ John Maritote, U.S. EPA Bruce Everetts, Illinois EPA Clayton Koher, ATSDR Rosauro Delrosario, EPA James Entzminger, U.S. EPA CEPP Leticia Colmenares, OSHA	Linda Nachowicz, U.S. EPA Charles Gebien, U.S. EPA USCG NRC, NRC Mick Hans, U.S. EPA OPA Mark Johnson, ATSDR Carol Ropski, U.S. EPA Monesh Chabria, U.S. EPA ORC
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Subject: #1 and Final POLREP
Rexnord Mercury
634 Glenn Avenue, Wheeling, IL
Latitude: 42.1247
Longitude: -87.9183

POLREP No.:	1	Site #:	
Reporting Period:		D.O. #:	
Start Date:	2/15/2007	Response Authority:	
Mob Date:	2/15/2007	Response Type:	
Completion Date:		NPL Status:	
CERCLIS ID #:		Incident Category:	
RCRIS ID #:		Contract #	

Site Description

On February 15, 2007, the Office of Public Affairs forwarded a hotline complaint to a number of U.S. EPA staff including Superfund Emergency Response and Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (CEPP). This complaint indicated that a 1/2 cup of mercury was spilled in a warehouse on or about February 2, 2007, tracked through the building, and not reported until the next day. The complainant indicated that a warehouse employee had their washing machine removed from his home because of high mercury levels. The complainant stated that a number of employees went to the hospital for blood testing. They also had work boots tested. In addition, the complainant indicated that the warehouse was closed for a week for clean-up. Overall, the complainant wanted to know if the employees were safe.

During the morning of February 15, OSC Simon and Associate Regional Counsel Monesh Chabria spoke to Ms. Janine Landow-Esser of Quarles & Brady, LLP, outside counsel for Rexnord Seal Operation (Rexnord). Ms. Landow-Esser confirmed that Rexnord did have a mercury spill on February 5, 2007, and that 2 or 3 people in the vicinity of the spill were sent to the hospital as a precautionary measure. Ms. Landow-Esser indicated that Rexnord screened the shoes of some employees and tested one employee's home where it was necessary to remove an employee's washing machine due to high mercury levels. On February 16, 2007, Rexnord's consultant, GZA

Environmental of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (GZA), sent a summary of all activities to date. This summary was immediately shared with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) so an action plan could be developed.

Rexnord reported this incident to the National Response Center on February 7 and stated this spill occurred on February 5 due to operator error. This incident was assigned incident # 825795. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency also received a report from Rexnord and assigned incident #, H-2007-0125. OSC Simon also contacted the Wheeling, Illinois Fire Department to find out any additional details about this spill. Wheeling Fire Department responded to the Rexnord spill, however, they only stayed 15 minutes. Wheeling Fire indicated that OSHA was involved in this incident.

Current Activities

On March 1, OSC Simon and Dr. Tom Baughman, IDPH, used a Lumex® to perform mercury screening in two employee homes, in Hoffman Estates Illinois, and McHenry, Illinois. These homes were selected based on our review of the GZA summary provided on February 16, subsequent correspondence, and conference calls with GZA. The employee that resided in Hoffman Estates would not allow Rexnord to test his home for mercury and the employee that lived in McHenry had his washing machine removed due to mercury contamination.

OSC Simon and Dr. Baughman were able to get access to the Hoffman Estates home. The highest airborne mercury reading on March 1 in the Hoffman Estates home was 10 nanograms per a cubic meter (ng/m³) of mercury. ATSDR recommends the residential indoor level for mercury vapor should not exceed 1,000 ng/m³ at the breathing zone. The highest airborne mercury reading detected on March 1 in the McHenry home was 454 ng/m³ inside the clothes dryer. Given this result, we recommended Rexnord replace the McHenry clothes dryer, since the mercury spill had happened almost a month ago and there were still mercury vapors emanating from the dryer. Later, Mrs. Lee informed us that her husband's work clothes and towels used on the floor had been sent for disposal by Rexnord, and the basement utility sink was remediated. Data eventually received from Rexnord indicated this home was not mercury screened until February 8, 2007 and that mercury binding soap was used on the utility sink.

On March 12, U.S. EPA, ATSDR, and IDPH met with Rexnord and performed a follow-up screening of the McHenry home. It appears that the spill occurred at 1:30 pm on February 5, 2007, when two employees were moving a multi-tube manometer from a second shelf location and it started leaking in the finishing portion of their warehouse. This manometer was made by Meriam Instrument, Model # 33K035; however, it is no longer manufactured, but can contain up to 15 pounds of mercury. Rexnord did not hire a clean-up contractor, SET of Wheeling, Illinois, until 10:00 pm, so not all employees were immediately mercury screened but some did go home and were later asked to have their boots screened and/or undergo blood and urine testing. On March 12, Rexnord was still unsure of the quantity of mercury that may have been spilled, but it did appear that the only home of mercury concern was the employee residence in McHenry, Illinois.

The highest level detected on March 12 in the McHenry, Illinois home was 74 ng/m³ of mercury in the left drain of the utility sink. Again, with time these mercury levels will dissipate. As they currently exist, they do not cause a human health hazard.

According to Richard Reiner, Rexnord Operations Manager, approximately \$800,000 was spent to

remediate mercury, of which about \$90,000 is being spent to for disposal of 9 roll-off container. Please note this Rexnord facility has approximately 100 employees. According to Mr. Reiner, this clean-up was conducted by SET using 24 hr operations and involved closing this facility, sending a number people for blood and urine testing, screening and replacing boots, screening and repackaging finished goods, and replacement of a washing machine and clothes dryer. Rexnord also hired GZA, who appeared to serve as an advisor and third-party reviewer of work performed by SET.

Planned Removal Actions

No further actions planned at this time.

Next Steps

None.

Key Issues

None at this time.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
Intramural Costs				
Total Site Costs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

Disposition of Wastes

One (1) 16 cubic yard roll-off box of "High-Mercury Debris" is being sent by Rexnord to Mercury Waste Solutions, Union Grove, Wisconsin.

Eight (8) 20 cubic yard roll-off-box of "low-level mercury debris" is currently being disposed of at EQ- The Environmental Quality Company, Michigan Disposal Waste Treatment Plant, Belleville, Michigan by Rexnord.

www.epaosc.org/rexnordmercury